



The Old Ironsides Report

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Former Iraqi soldiers hired as security guards in Baghdad

**Story and photo by Spc. Ryan Smith
372nd MPAD**

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Perhaps the most important factor in Iraq is security. Without an effective security force, basic needs, such as electricity and water, cannot be established for the citizens of Iraq. In many instances, criminals have stolen or destroyed utility lines that engineers have already repaired.

Coalition forces work around the clock to provide security in Baghdad, but there are not enough soldiers to provide regular security for all public facilities, and patrol the streets.

Therefore, former Iraqi military servicemembers have been hired to work as security guards in banks, former government buildings and other infrastructure facilities.

Known as the Iraqi Force Protection Security Force, the organization of approximately 77 former Iraqi soldiers provides security at protected sites around the city, according to 2nd Lt. Jared Vineyard, fire support officer for A Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division.

The program began around the first of July, with more than 700 applications from Iraqi men who wanted to work as security guards, Vineyard said. Soldiers from A Company, working with interpreters, sorted through the applications and hired former Iraqi soldiers to train as security guards.

During the training, American soldiers ensured that the new members of the security force could handle such weapons as the AK-47 rifle, clean and maintain them.

The course also introduced the new security officers to police techniques and close-quarters combat.

Beyond the physical aspects, the trainees were taught about ethics and human rights. "We made sure that they understand that they can't just beat up looters," said Vineyard.

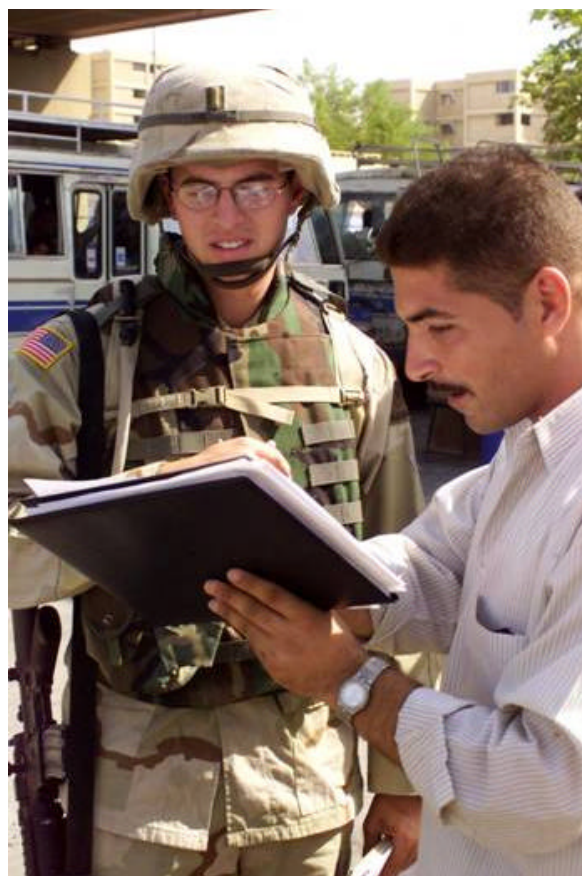
"They are excited to work," he said. "Many of them haven't worked in a while, and they're willing to work seven days a week."

The looting disgusts them; they want a hand in helping to eliminate that problem, said Vineyard.

"I want security in Baghdad," said Mukhdad Fahd, an assistant platoon commander of the Iraqi Force Protection Security Force. "I want to help the Iraqi people."

The program will assist in eventually turning the security of Iraq over to the Iraqi people.

"It gives the Iraqis a chance to help themselves," Vineyard said. "They are learning to take care of themselves."



**2nd Lt. Jared Vineyard, fire support officer, A Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, speaks with Mukhdad Fahd, an assistant platoon commander of the Iraqi Force Protection Security Force in Baghdad.
Photo by Spc. Ryan Smith
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NEWS

Sharon to Continue Dismantling Outposts

JERUSALEM (AP) - Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pledged Monday to continue removing unauthorized settlement outposts from the West Bank, but warned against equating them with settlements built with government approval. Sharon was called into the parliament to answer opposition motions criticizing his government for failing to remove dozens of tiny outposts put up on West Bank hilltops in the past two years. The U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan requires Israel to remove all the settlement points put up since March 2002.

Heavy Liberia Fighting Kills at Least 90

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) - A thundering barrage of mortars shook Liberia's capital Monday, hitting two U.S. Embassy compounds and residential neighborhoods, and killing more than 90 people, as government and rebel forces fought over President Charles Taylor's last stronghold. Wailing with grief, Liberians lined up bloodied, mangled bodies outside the U.S. Embassy, demanding to know why Washington has not sent troops to end more than a decade of strife in the country founded by freed American slaves.

Austria Doctors Perform Tongue Transplant

VIENNA, Austria (AP) - Doctors in Vienna have carried out the first successful tongue transplant on a human being, the hospital where the surgery took place said Monday. An unidentified 42-year-old man suffering from a malignant tumor affecting his tongue and jaw underwent a 14-hour operation at Vienna's General Hospital on Saturday in which doctors removed the tumor and attached the new tongue, hospital spokeswoman Karin Fehringer said.

News of the Weird

On June 28, as Orange County (Calif.) sheriff's deputy Owen Hall was standing beside a car he had stopped, he was shot in the leg with an arrow. After Hall pulled the arrow out and reported to a hospital, deputies combed the neighborhood and finally located archer Tri Thanh Lam, who had apparently been practicing in his back yard when an arrow got away from him. Lam was arrested, but he went free two days later when authorities realized that he had committed no crime, since the state's negligent-shooting law applies only to guns. [Los Angeles Times]

A suspected burglar in Albany, Ore., apparently escaped in June after failing in his quest to break into a warehouse, but he left behind his bolt cutters, some burned clothing and part of his scalp. Police said the man had attempted to cut through a 480-volt line and probably had "severe" burns. [KATU-TV (Portland)]

SPORTS

Armstrong Demolishes Rivals in 15th Stage

LUZ-ARDIDEN, France (AP) - Riding like a man possessed, Lance Armstrong demolished his rivals in a drama-packed climb in the 15th stage of the Tour de France on Monday, recovering from a hard crash to stamp his authority on the race after two weeks of difficulties. Armstrong's win at Luz-Ardiden, high in the misty mountains of the Pyrenees, greatly increased the four-time champion's chances of equaling

Miguel Indurain's record of five successive Tour wins.

Let the good times roll

OSTRANDER, Ohio (AP) - There was a crowd around the TV in the clubhouse at Mill Creek Golf Club, and everyone wanted a good look. Then Thomas Bjorn's putt slid to a stop inches short of the 18th hole, and the celebrations began. Ben Curtis, a PGA Tour rookie playing his first major, had just won the British Open. Curtis was on the practice tee preparing for a possible playoff when Bjorn's putt missed. "There was no way in the world I thought he would get there," said his father, Bob Curtis. "I thought he would compete, make the cut maybe, get some good rounds in and experience what goes on in a championship. But to win it? No way."

With tears in his eyes, Ben Curtis thanked his family during a short acceptance speech at Royal St. George's Golf Club in Sandwich, England, holding the famed claret jug. Bob Curtis had been out mowing greens, so he didn't see the entire final round. But he made sure that he had a seat in front of the 25-inch TV for much of the round.

"I wanted to see his reaction when he got the trophy," he said. "The only thing is, he forgot to kiss the trophy."

Ben Curtis factbox

Born: May 26, 1977 in Ostrander, Ohio. His house was only 50 yards from the practice putting green of the Millcreek Golf Course, built by his grandfather. Started playing golf at the age of three.

1999 - Won the Ohio Amateur tournament. Semi-finalist at the U.S. Amateur.

2000 - Won the Ohio Amateur again. Runner-up in the Western Amateur and won the Players' Amateur to be No. 1-ranked amateur in the world.

2002 - Qualified for the U.S. PGA Tour at the third attempt.

2003 - Played 13 PGA Tour events, missing four cuts.

Best finish was tied for 13th at the Western Open, which earned him qualification for the British Open, his first major championship and only the 16th Tour event of his career.

Ranked 396th in the world before the tournament he completed rounds of 72, 72, 70 and 69 to win by one shot from Denmark's Thomas Bjorn and Fiji's Vijay Singh.

-- Reuters

This day in military history: 22 July, 1298

The English under King Edward I, making good use of the longbow to open the way for a cavalry charge, defeated Scottish forces under William Wallace at the Battle of Falkirk. Wallace was forced into exile, and Edward completed his conquest of Scotland in 1304.